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10 March 1964

BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Factors Influencing Decision to Surface the A-11

1. Those considerations which influenced the decision to surface the A-11 (LRI) version of the OXCART vehicle were as follows:

a. The obvious advantages of a controlled surfacing at a time and under circumstances of our choice as opposed to an emergency surfacing which might have resulted from an incident or news media exposure and without the necessary preparation and briefing of witting personnel on the manner in which they should respond to queries. The timing of the surfacing was dictated by the following factors:

- (1) Increasing awareness of industry and the press (Detailed in Attachment #1).
- (2) Escalated operational activity--increasing numbers of aircraft and flights.
- (3) Extended flight profiles outside our restricted operating area.
- (4) Increased security problems generated by FAA and ADC tracking of OXCART flights.
- (5) Hazards of attempting to cover accidents involving the OXCART vehicle, made obvious by the crash of an A-12 in Utah on 24 May 1963.

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(6) The need for an attributable (surfaced) vehicle, the A-11, to cover any future loss of a reconnaissance configured aircraft (A-12 or R-12).

b. Desire of the U. S. Government to make technology data on the A-11 available to participants and evaluators of the SST program.

(1) Group evaluating the SST competition proposals was currently in session and was lacking significant information which would unquestionably affect its judgements.

(2) FAA cited 1 March 1963 as the deadline for introducing technology data into the evaluation group's deliberations if it were to be of any practical use.

2. In addition to the foregoing, which were the primary considerations of the Agency in agreeing to the surfacing, the Department of Defense was experiencing increasing difficulty in concealing its participation in the program. These problems stemmed from:

a. The increasingly high rate of expenditures as the SAC R-12 aircraft came into production.

b. The political pressures resulting from the DOD/Congressional controversy involving appropriations for the IMI and manned bomber.

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Attachment as stated

SAL/OSA/ [ ] :sld (10 March 64)

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Attachment 1 to BYE-2015-64

SUBJECT: Project OXCART  
(Awareness Outside of Cleared Community)

1 Nov 63 - News article in "Herald-News", Fontana, California, speculating about "super secret Project site".

1 Nov 63 - Mr. Marvin Miles, Aviation Editor, Los Angeles Times, telephonically contacted Westinghouse Corp., Pittsburgh, attempting to confirm if employees of that firm were travelling covertly to "the desert" each week in connection with top secret Project which he suspects may have "CIA" association.

October 63 - Dr. James B. Rea, Independent Consultant to several aircraft firms presented briefings at Hughes Aircraft Company and Telecomputing Corporation during which he accurately and openly speculated about recent LAC developments.

October 63 - A contractor employee from P & W enroute from Los Angeles International Airport via taxi to the Project Terminal at LAC was queried by the driver as to "whether he was enroute to Nevada".

July & Sep 63 - Mr. Robert Hotz, Editor, Aviation Week, indicated his awareness of developments at Burbank.

5 Sep 63 - "The Hartford Courant", Hartford, Conn., referred to the "secret" development of the J-58 engine in an article of the SST.

April to Oct 63 - Several sightings of the Project OXCART vehicle by commercial airline crews.

June 63 - Convair Tech. Rep. at NORTON AFB, California wrote to his home plant at Ft. WORTH advising that LAC has secretly developed a MACH 3. Aircraft using titanium alloy.

March 63 - Colonel John J. Smith, (AF Retired) and his Requirements Staff at North American Aviation deducted from various indications in industry that Kelly Johnson has a MACH 3 aircraft in flight test.

Feb 63 - Mr. Robert Widmer, Vice-President, Convair, FT. WORTH (cleared OXCART) advised that it is common knowledge in the aircraft industry that Kelly Johnson is involved in the manufacture of an advanced U-2 follow on.

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Jan 63 -

Mr. William Clegern, Asst. to Director, Advanced Technology, Martin Co., Denver, Colorado, informed a group of people at his firm that "Lockheed was working on a super U-2 that would fly in excess of 100,000 feet at a speed of 3.2 MACH". His statement was based on heresay and his personal speculations.

April 62 -

Admiral John B. Pearson, U. S. N. (Ret.), Vice-President, Development and Planning, North American Aviation accurately concluded from his speculations and industrial indications that Kelly Johnson was developing a MACH 3 Reconnaissance aircraft which would operate at 80,000 to 85,000 feet.

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